

# ZIONIST CLASSICS

A GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF

AUTO-EMANCIPATION-	<i>l. pinsker</i>
ROME & JERUSALEM-	<i>moses hess</i>
THE JEWISH STATE-	<i>theo. herzl</i>
SOCIALIST-ZIONISM-	<i>d. ben gurion</i>
REVO. CONSTRUCT.	<i>b. katznelson</i>

GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF AUTO-EMANCIPATION  
by Leo Pinsker

FIRST SESSION

**Objective:** To determine and analyze the constituent elements which make up and constitute the Jewish problem.

A. Survey briefly the forerunners of Zionism up to Pinsker.

B. Read the Text: p.p. 3-20.

C. Questions and Discussions:

- 1) What significance, if any, do you attribute to the title "Auto-Emancipation"?
- 2) Distinguish the movements in Jewish life for emancipation and those for "auto-emancipation".
- 3) What is Pinsker's underlying motive, if any, in prefacing his work with Hillel's "If I am not for myself, who will be for me, and if not now, when?"
- 4) In your opinion, does Pinsker consider the Jewish problem a modern phenomenon or a chronic Galut problem? Give references to support your view.
- 5) In all countries where Jews reside they constitute a minority. But then there are other minorities which live among foreign nations. Wherein does the position of the Jewish minority differ from the others?
- 6) Fear, Judeo-phobia, anti-Semitism -- these concepts are treated by Pinsker chiefly from a biological-psychological point of view. Do you approve of this approach? Or do you attribute this phenomenon to economic, cultural, and political reasons? Which factors would you particularly ascribe to present-day anti-Semitism?
- 7) Where has modern emancipation failed? How has it affected the individual Jew and the collective?
- 8) "Having analyzed Judeophobia as an hereditary from of demonopathy, peculiar to the human race, and having represented anti-Semitism as based upon an inherited aberration of the human mind, we must draw the important conclusion, that we must give up contending against these hostile impulses, just as we give up contending against every other inherited predisposition." Do you agree with this view? What effect, if any, will the creation of Israel have on this "inherited predisposition"?
- 9) Wherein are Jews "more" to blame for this "Jewish Question"? Is the lack of self-respect of the individual Jew or the collective responsible for our anomaly?
- 10) How has the belief in the "Mission of the Jew" affected the struggle for national rehabilitation?

## SECOND SESSION

Objective: To find a solution, not a palliative,  
for the Jewish problem.

A. Read the text -- p.p. 20-35.

B. Questions and Discussion:

- 1) What is the solution which Pinsker proposes? What forces operating in Jewish life does he exploit in order to achieve this goal?
- 2) Describe his territorialist views. What place does he ascribe to Palestine?
- 3) "This would aim chiefly and especially at creating a secure and inviolable home for the surplus of those Jews who live as proletarians in the different countries and are a burden to the native citizens.....We must occupy ourselves with the foundation of such a lasting refuge, not with the purposeless collection of donations for pilgrims or fugitives who forsake, in their consternation, a hospitable home, to perish in the abyss of a strange and unknown land." If Pinsker's view is correct what would Zionism offer to the American Jew? Does this view coincide with the modern theory of Zionism? How does Socialist Zionism view this?
- 4) What organizational instruments does Pinsker propose? Compare them with the present Zionist agencies.
- 5) From the following bibliography:
  - a) Nahum Sokolow: "History of Zionism" London, 1918
  - b) Nahum Sokolow: "Hibbath Zion", Jerusalem, 1935
  - c) Ahad Ha'am: "Pinsker and Political Zionism" in Leon Simon's collection "Zionism and Judaism".
  - d) Pinsker's address at the Kattowitz Conference of the Chovevei Zion printed herewith, indicate the change which Pinsker's view underwent as regards
    1. the economic factor in Jewish life
    2. Palestine as a Homeland.
- 6) Evaluate Pinsker's "Auto-Emancipation in the light of the present time.

## GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF ROME AND JERUSALEM

by Moses Hess

Objective: To analyze and understand the relation between Zionism, Judaism and Socialism as propounded by Hess.

A. Discuss briefly the life of Moses Hess and the period in which he lived.

B. Read the text pp. 40-60

C. Questions and Discussions:

"History embraces the social sphere of life...It is on a par with nature...it is in constant development.. As yet it has not reached its third phase of development--the Historical Sabbath."

1. What does Hess mean by the term "Historical Sabbath"?
2. What does Hess consider the dogma of Judaism to be?
3. Hess refers to Judaism as an active religion in metaphorical terminology. What does this mean?
4. How does Hess reconcile the Jewish messianic belief with the Christian belief in the world to come?
5. What are the binding phenomena in Jewish life, according to Hess?

D. Read the text--pp. 82-105

"Judaism is a world philosophy...has for its aim the election and perfection not only of the Jewish people, but the entire human genius...it is the most important constituent of the spiritualistic expression of Humanity"

1. What is the crisis in religion, according to Hess?
2. Why does Hess condemn the reform movement in Jewish life?
3. Why does Hess prefer the Orthodox synagogue in Galut?

E. Read the text--pp. 105-125

"Society is an organic body composed of organs--the races. Each organ has a function to perform..There exists in every organ a natural tendency to perform its function."

1. Point out the fallacy evident in the opinion that Jewish Nationalism was opposed to humanitarian philosophy.
2. What is Hess' organic theory of humanity, Does it apply today?
3. What is the difference between nature and humanity in relation to the Divine Law?
4. What are the three life-spheres Hess mentions?

F. Read the text: pp 125-142

" March forward, ye noble hearts! The day on which the

Jewish tribes return to their fatherland will be epoch making in the history of humanity. Oh! how will the East tremble at your coming! How quickly under the influence of Labor and industry, will the enervations of the people vanish, in the land where voluptuousness idleness, and robbery have held way for thousands of years."

1. What is the major problem of the national movement?
2. Why in Hess' opinion do progressive Jews object to the restoration of the Jewish State?
3. What does he refer to in speaking of the yoke of the "Kingdom of Heaven".
4. Give four points under which the society for the Colonization of Palestine will function?

G.

#### SUMMARY

1. Hess' formulation of the nature of Judaism.
2. Judaism and Hellenism.
3. Judaism and Christianity.
- 4.. Jewish renaissance necessary for the welfare of the entire world.
5. The organic concept of society.
6. Socialism and the solution of the Jewish problem.
7. Jewish colonization in Palestine.
8. The inevitability of remaining strangers among the nations of the world.
9. The function of the Jews in the universal society.

GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF THE JEWISH STATE  
by Theodor Herzl

First Session

Life of Benjamin Zev (Theodor) Herzl  
The Jew in Eastern, Central, Western Europe 1860-1890  
Eretz Israel, 1860-1890  
East-West Conflict in Jewish Life 1860-1890

Second Session

"Judenstaat" (The Jewish State) Theodor Herzl  
Herzl's Analysis of the "Jewish Question"  
Cause and effect of anti-Semitism  
"Palestina oder Argentina?"  
Herzl's Plan

Third Session

Herzl's plan for a "Jewish Company"  
Real Estate, national and private land ownership,  
workers' homes, labor, the seven-hour day, commerce,  
securities, industry, capital funds.

Herzl's plan for aliyah, clergy, towns, the middle-class,  
productivization of the Jew, habits.

Fourth Session

The Jewish State - a detailed plan.  
Society of Jews, possession of the land, the Constitution,  
language, laws, army, flag, treaties; Herzl's conclusion.

**GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF SOCIALIST ZIONISM**  
**By David Ben Gurion**

**Objective:** To determine and analyze the nature of Socialist Zionism.

- A. Basic differences between Socialist Zionism and other Zionist philosophies:**
- 1) Hagshama
  - 2) Jewish Labor
- B. Any reference to "Pure Zionism" is incorrect. Zionism must have social content.**
- 1) Fascist Zionism
  - 2) Middle class Zionism
  - 3) Socialist Zionism
- C. Zionism as a whole has as its responsibility the national survival. It may appear that our Socialist program does not coincide completely with Zionism--however, this is not true.**
- 1) Zionist Socialism flows in an identity of will and need and aspiration and effort from those who realize Zionism and Socialism: the Jewish worker.
  - 2) No true socialist can keep aloof from his people; every true socialist desires to see his people transformed into a working and self-governing people and is duty-bound to take part in the struggle being carried on in his own land.
  - 3) Both Zionism and Socialism were created for our sake, for the sake of our own redemption, for our own emancipation, for our own regeneration.

GUIDE TO THE STUDY OF REVOLUTIONARY CONSTRUCTIVISM  
by Berl Katznelson

The essays of this pamphlet, which have become classic, were delivered orally. In 1934 the Youth Department of the Histadrut convoked a seminar of leaders of all youth organizations. A three day discussion ensued on the ideology and course of our movement. Berl Katznelson was then called upon to summarize the discussion. He spoke about six hours--answering the various questions posed by the youth leaders. His summary was issued as a pamphlet which contains the finest material we have for youth education--aiming as it did to answer the various doubts, contradictions and uncertainties in which most serious youthful minds are enmeshed.

The preface explains clearly the central idea of Berl Katznelson's outlook: a young Jew must face life fearlessly and independently. He must feel naturally, not apologetically, the right of his people to live and develop freely, and he must chart his course not according to accepted formulae deduced from alien sources but according to the unique needs, problems and reality of the Jews. He must follow this course courageously and not allow the destiny of his people to be placed in the Sodom bed of any rigid orthodoxy--even of the accepted Socialist revolutionary orthodoxy.

I.

The first essay deals with Nachman Syrkin--the pathfinder of Socialist Zionism, and analyzes his great contribution to Jewish Socialist thought--his rejection of cosmopolitanism, his analysis of the Jewish problem, his scathing criticism of the General Zionist movement and the Jewish Socialist movement of that day, his integration of the two just and necessary trends in Jewish life, both the national and the social reconstructive trends.

Thus the first essay should lead to a discussion which should include the following topics and answer the following questions:

- 1) Life of Nachman Syrkin.
- 2) Condition of General Zionist movement at that time--its dependence on diplomatic activity and the lack of any practical constructive work in Eretz Israel--such as immigration, labor, colonization.
- 3) The Bund--history and development--its stand for cultural autonomy, but against territorial concentration--its complete rejection of the Jewish past and historical heritage, and its hatred of all national and religious sentiment--its blind acceptance of Marxist formulae, disregarding the forces impelling the Jews to deproletarianization and immigration.
- 4) What are these forces which tend to make the Jews "superfluous" citizens and necessitate migration?
- 5) Why is territorial concentration and the upbuilding of a national homeland the solution?



## II.

The second essay deals with youth education and endeavors to point out the so needed harmony which youth education must strive to achieve between our intellectual ideology and emotional conditioning.

The discussion should answer the following questions:

1) Why cannot the educational methodology of a Socialist youth organization be similar to that of a Fascist one?

2) Can the indoctrination of youth with certain ideals be inspired only by an appeal to their reason?

3) What are the causes for the clogging up of the Jews' independent emotional susceptibility?

### III.

The third essay deals with the place of tradition in our movement. Katznelson points out both the need of a critical scrutiny of traditions and an observance of those traditions which are capable of forging and enriching the national and social consciousness of a people--particularly is this essential as regards the Jewish people because of the unprecedented tasks we aim to accomplish and the extraordinary difficulties which stand in our way.

The discussion should evolve about the following questions:

- 1) What are the sources of idealistic aspirations--are they merely the fruit of present objective conditions--or have they other roots?
- 2) What is and should be the role of the past in the present and future historical course of a nation?
- 3) Is Socialism to be built upon the ruins of bourgeois culture or will it synthesize the best of all preceding cultures and advance further?
- 4) What role do our traditional holiday commemorations play in the development of a healthy national consciousness?
- 5) Modern man cannot celebrate wholeheartedly traditional holidays in their ancient form. New forms are necessary. Can these new forms arise through a discarding of their historical roots and symbolism? Do you know of any holiday celebration now in Israel which have successfully integrated the past with the present and future? (Shavuot? Hamisha Oser Be'Shvat, Chanukah, Pesach)
- 6) How are our holidays celebrated in the U.S? What is the attitude of Jewish non-Zionist youth towards them?

### IV.

Continuing his aggressive attack upon all Jewish tendencies towards self-abnegation and belittlement, Katznelson next turns to the re-constructive work in Eretz Israel--Jewish labor--explaining why we were perfectly justified in insisting on the employment of Jewish labor in Jewish enterprises.

- 1) What is the aim and ethical background of our struggle for Jewish Labor?
- 2) What is meant by speculation in revolution, "servility within the revolution"?
- 3) Describe the transition of socialist outlook from a cosmopolitan one to an international one. Describe also the activities of Soviet Russia aiming at the cultural renaissance of all national minorities within its boundaries.
- 4) What are the historic circumstances which hinder the complete true equality of all strata of the population in a capitalistic society?
- 5) What are the specific historic circumstances which lead to anti-Jewish discrimination?
- 6) What is the attitude of most labor movements towards immigration and why?
- 7) What are the specific characteristics of Jewish immigration to Israel?

8) What complexities arise from the juxtaposition of an advanced capitalist and socialist economy besides a primitive feudalism?

9) What added difficulties do these place in the struggle of the Jews to live a life of self labor in Palestine and why would the entrenchment of Jews as laborers in Palestine be impossible without specific defensive measures?

## V.

Pursuing the line of aggressive defense of our unorthodox tactics, Katznelson points out why and in what form a certain amount of class collaboration in Zionism is not only permissible but that the realization of Zionism and the upbuilding of a Socialist economy in Israel is impossible without this class collaboration--referring particularly to our participation in the Zionist Congress and our coalition in the Zionist Executive.

1) Can formulae of objective development deduced from the historical course of other nations be applied in their entirety to Jewish reality and the Palestinian scene?

2) Would Zionism be possible without the pioneering undertakings of the labor movement in the field of constructing the new economy of Israel?

3) From the development of the Zionist Congress--demonstrate how on the Jewish scene the Congress represents a real parliament although lacking formal parliamentary prerogatives and powers.

4) Can "class struggle" be interpreted only as the struggle between employees and employer in the narrow sense of the term or do not the building of a cooperative labor economy, the education of youthful masses towards chalutzit, the inculcation of Hebrew culture have a distinct correlation with the meaning of class struggle in Jewish life?

5) Which course has been vindicated by history--i.e. by the development of Israel. Trace the growing strength of the Palestinian labor movement under labor leadership.

## VI.

Turning from problems of internal tactics and education to those of our tactics against opposing parties especially our struggle against the Fascist wing of the Zionist movement--Revisionism. Katznelson decries all violent methods. He analyzes the psychological background of this modern efflorescence of the primitive idea of dictatorship and brute force and points out its inner contradictions to socialist mentality. Turning to our specific situation, he demonstrates that all such methods are first of all mere phraseology and lack real force; secondly, will lead to the exact opposite consequences--that by adopting the methods of our enemies we shall deprive ourselves of the main source of our strength--our revolutionary constructivism--which has placed us at the helm of the Zionist movement today.

1) What is the relation between the "means" and the end"? Can socialism ever be achieved through Socialists adopting Fascist methods and philosophy of struggle?

2) Can the inevitability of socialism be predicated upon the "scientific" analysis of social development or is it rather a belief and faith in the inherent dignity of man?

3) Fascism is often termed a "mass psychosis". What are its causes?

4) Draw an analogy between European Fascism and Jewish Fascism -- Revisionism. In what are they alike and wherein do they differ?

5) Draw an analogy between the Jewish labor movement in Israel and the European labor movements. In what are they alike and wherein do they differ?

6) Why did the essence of our political struggle express itself not in a struggle for power--but rather in a struggle to facilitate the immigration of the Jewish masses and their entrenchment in the soil and the key industries of Israel?

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